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REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended. The amendments to claim 1 are supported by at least the description at page 2, line 27 to page 3, line 24, and the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 25 of the present specification. Claim 5 has been amended to correct a formality issue. No new matter has been added. Claims 1 and 4-9 are pending.

Objections and §112 Rejections

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because the term "valve" recited in claims 4 and 6 is not shown in the drawings. Applicants note that the feature 6 referenced in Figures 1 and 2 provides a valve function as described in the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 24 of the present application. While the term "vent" is associated with reference number 6 in the present specification, the term "vent" is defined as a structure that "opens or closes the flow canals to the nozzles 5" (see page 5, lines 26-27 of the present specification), which is a valve function. Therefore, the term "valve" is supported in the drawings.

The specification was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 (d)(1) for failing to provide antecedent basis for the term "valve." Claims 1 and 4-9 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, for failing to describe the term "valve." Applicants submit that the term "valve," while not specifically referenced in the present specification, is fully

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supported by the term "vent" and the description of feature 6 shown in the Figures of the present application. The present specification recites that the vent "opens or closes the flow canals to the nozzles 5" (see page 5, lines 26-27 of the present specification), and goes on to state that "the vent used may be in itself of any structure whatsoever" (see page 5, lines 31-33 of the present specification) so long as it performs the intended opening and closing function. Therefore, Applicants submit that the specification does provide proper description and antecedent basis for the term "valve."

The Office Action comments about the limitation of claim 1 related to "glue flow into the compensation canal only from the flow canals within the one canal zone."

Applicants direct the Examiner to the description in the paragraph beginning at p. 5, line 24 of the present specification (p. 6, lines 5-8, in particular) wherein the specification provides detailed support for this limitation.

The Office Action further comments concerning the definition of the canal zones in claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the flow canals of one canal zone divide into at least two flow canals for an successive canal zone. The division of one flow canal into at least two flow canals does not occur until the successive zone.

Claim 5 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) for an improper claim dependency. Claim 5 has been amended to properly depend from claim 1.

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§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bartley et al. (US 3,722,469). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Bartley teaches an apparatus for distributing coating and impregnates on a web of non-woven fabric. The apparatus includes a distribution system that includes a supply pipe 2 that divides into plurality of branches 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 that in turn empty into distributing elements 19a-d. A plurality of rigid pipes 20 extend from each of the distributing elements 19a-d and are coupled to flexible pipes 21 that terminate in nozzles 26. The supply pipe 2 is comparable to the feeder canal recited in claim 1. The sets of branches 8, 10 and 12, 14, 16, 18 and the sets of pipes 20, 21 are comparable the flow canals of the plurality of successive flow canal zones recited in claim 1. The branches 8, 10 define one zone, wherein each branch 8, 10 divides into respective branches 12, 14 and 16, 18 as a successive zone. The branches 12, 14 and 16, 18 of then divide further into pipes 20, 21 as the next successive zone.

Bartley fails to disclose "a compensation canal connected to the flow canals of one of the canal zones, wherein the glue flows into the compensation canal only from the flow canals within the one canal zone," as required by claim 1. The distributing elements 19a-d disclosed by Bartley are each used separate from each other to connect one of the branches 12, 14, 16, 18 to a set of pipes 20. Figure 6 of Bartley shows one such arrangement of distributing element 19a coupled to pipes 20 (radially out of the sides of

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the element 19a) and to the branch 12 axially at a center of the element 19a (see Figure 1 of Bartley for further illustration of the connection between element 19a and branch 12).

Furthermore, the elements 19a-d disclosed by Bartley are not in fluid communication with each other such that they meet the limitation of claim 1, "wherein the glue flowing in the compensation canal is available for flow into any of the flow canals within the one canal zone." Bartley discloses some type of frame structure that extends horizontally in Figure 1 at the connection point between branches 12, 14, 16, 18 and the elements 19a-d, but fails to disclose any structure that provides connection of the branches/pipes that would provide the flow of glue as required by claim 1. Therefore, Bartley fails to disclose at least a compensation channel as required by claim 1 and the claims that depend from it.

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Owen (US 753,730). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Owen discloses a pipe A having plugged ends B and a plurality of nozzles C. The pipe A is fed by a pipe K having a connection N at one end. Owen also discloses a branching pipe defined between pipe A and connection N by pipe sections E, E' and valve F. The branching pipe provides additional control of flow into pipe A. Thus, Owen discloses a input to the system beginning at connection N that is comparable to the feeder canal of claim 1, and pipes K and E, E' that divide from the input and are comparable to the "at least two flow canals" that divide from each flow canals in each of

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the plurality of canal zones as recited by claim 1. The nozzles C are comparable to the plurality of nozzles recited by claim 1.

Owen fails to disclose "a plurality of successive flow canal zones, each zone comprises flow canals such that each flow canal within each zone divides into at least two flow channels in a successive canal zone," as required by claim 1. Owen discloses only a single division of the input (at connection N) into two pipes or flow canals K and E, E', thereby defining what is comparable to a single flow canal zone (as defined by claim 1). The flow canal zones of claim 1 (plural zones) each comprise more than one flow canal and each divide into at least two flow channels. Owen fails to disclose such structure because it discloses a single pair of divided pipes K and E, E', and therefore fails to disclose every limitation of claim 1 and the claims that depend from it.

Owen also fails to disclose "a compensation canal connected to the flow canals of one of the canal zones, wherein the glue flows into the compensation canal only from the flow canals within the one canal zone," as required by claim 1. The rejection contends that the section of pipe E', which defines a portion of the branching pipe between connection N and the pipe A, meets the limitation of the claimed compensation canal. However, the pipe section E' fails to provide glue flow that "is available for flow into any of the flow canals within the one canal zone," as required by claim 1. The flow within pipe section E' is not available within pipe section K. Owen discloses only one direction of flow, which is from the connection N, through the pipe K or the branching pipe E, E', to the pipe A, and out of the nozzles C. Therefore, pipe section E' fails to meet the

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limitations of the compensation canal required by claim 1, and Owen fails to disclose every limitation of claim 1 and the claims that depend from it for this additional reason.

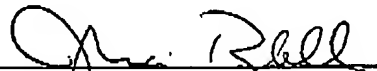
In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is requested. If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' attorney listed below at (612) 371.5387.

Respectfully submitted,

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